

Just Checking In
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Contentment

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“Contentment is that holy sense of satisfaction of having God, and in Him having all I will ever need” Psalm 17:15 Psalm 90:14 Psalm 23:1

“Christian contentment is that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God's wise and fatherly disposal in every condition.”

Jeremiah Burroughs: The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment

Burroughs was a Puritan pastor in England from 1624-1646. I read this book in my early days as a believer and found it greatly convicting and greatly comforting. It is a far more extensive study than this devotional, and you can get the book free online at this website

<https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/contentment02.html>

Let's begin with some definitions.

Holy Contentment: The soul's delight and satisfaction in the presence of God **Psalm 16:11**
This is the contentment we are commanded to have and is the only contentment that is true and lasting.

Unholy Discontent: If we are not experiencing holy contentment, then we are experiencing unholy discontent. Unholy discontent is the source of greed, envy, jealousy, arrogance, and ingratitude. It is evidence of listening to the voice of the serpent and turning away from God in our hearts. It was the basis of all sin, both angelic and human. Prov 27:20, 30:15 Ecc 5:10

Unholy Contentment: There is a false, artificial, unholy contentment that is actually sin!

- a) Apathy – a lack of all desire (Buddhism) Nothing matters, who cares... **Prov 19:24 1 Kgs 19:4**
- b) Laziness – a lack of responsibility regarding my God-given calling **Joshua 7:7**
- c) Carelessness – a lack of concern about what really does matter **Deut 6:11-12 Hosea 13:6** When I fed them, they were satisfied; when they were satisfied, they became proud; then they forgot me.

Holy Discontent: What we *must not* be content with: Ps 42:1 Ps 17:15 Phil 3:10-16

Psalm 42:1... our love for God, Phil 3:10-13... our knowledge of God,
Ps 119:18... our knowledge of His Word, Ps 17:15... our present likeness to Christ,
our present spiritual progress, depth of faith, sensitivity to sin, or our love for His people...

Holy Contentment: What we *must be* content with: *What* God provides, *how* He leads, His *grace*, His *presence* and *promises*. **1 Thess 5:16-18 1 Tim 6:6-8 (Discontent and Ingratitude**

are inseparable – and ingratitude is the mother of many sins. The formula in 1 Tim 6 only works one way! **Godliness with contentment = great gain!** (True riches!) But if we shuffle the order, we come up with the serpent’s deceptions.

Lie #1 Great gain with godliness = contentment “If I had more money, and was a believer, then I would be content.” **Not!** When money is in the equation, true contentment cannot exist.

Lie #2 Great gain with contentment = godliness “If I had more money and was content with it, then I would be godly.” **Not!** Money cannot satisfy therefore you will never be content and will always want more, and that is called greed, and is the opposite of godliness and contentment.

Then we rightly ask the next question” Where can I find true, holy, contentment in this life? Good news! The Bible clearly reveals the source of true, lasting, holy contentment. Holy contentment flows from a proper , biblical understanding of God, myself, and life!

What Holy Contentment flows from:

1) A Proper Knowledge of the Character of God Job 1-2 2 Cor 12 Phil 3 Phil 4

- a) **His sovereignty** – nothing comes to me or is denied me but through His hands Job 1-2
- b) **His wisdom** – He knows what is best for me in all He allows or brings to me Gen 50:20
- c) **His purpose** – to conform me to Christ’s image, use me for His greater glory, and satisfy my soul in Himself
2 Cor 12:9-11 Jere 29:11
- d) **His love** – to draw me to Himself that I might know and enjoy Him forever Heb 13:5 John 17:24

2) A Proper Knowledge of Myself Rev 20 Jere 17:9 Prov Romans 3:19-26

- a) **My sin** – deserving of eternal wrath long ago and eternally Rev 20:11-15
- b) **My constant rebellion** – expressed in self-centered desires, fretful discontent & frustration
Jere 17:9 Ps 73 Job 42:1 *“prone to wander, Lord I feel it.... prone to leave the God I love...”*
- c) **My undeserving soul** – unworthy of the smallest grace given by God or man – I deserve His wrath!
Gen 32:10

3) A Proper Perspective on Life, Suffering, and Eternity 2 Cor 12 Psalm 73

- a) **of the purpose of my life** – to glorify God, know Him better, enjoy Him more fully, and serve Him more effectively Phil 1:20; 4:11-2
- b) **of His purpose in my suffering and need** – to bring me closer to Him and provide deeper fellowship with Him Prov 30:9 Psalm 119:71,75 Phil 3:8-10 2 Cor 12:9 Genesis 50:20 Job 42:1
- c) **of what awaits me** at the end of this earthly pilgrimage Psalm 73 1 John 3:2 Rev 22:3

4) Biblical examples of contentment

a) **Joseph** 20 God statements Gen 37-50 God meant it for good **Gen 50:20** (“Manasseh” Gen 41:51)

b) **Paul** I have learned... to be content... whatever my circumstances **Phil 4:11-12** 2 Cor 12:9

c) **Mary** (sister of Martha) “Only one thing is necessary...” **Luke 10:42**

Self Check Questions

1) Which characterizes me: Thankfulness or Disappointment? Do I tend to complain (even internally) or give thanks as a default response to life’s happenings?

2) Do I see everything in life as coming from God’s hand and for His good and ultimate purposes, or do I forget God’s sovereign providence in my daily experiences?

3) Am I content? Am I satisfied in God? If not, what is my idol that I am pursuing in the vain hope it will satisfy me? Will I repent and come back to Him?

As Augustine of Hippo said” “Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee.”

For Further Study

Job 1-2, 38-42; Book of Ruth; Philippians; 2 Corinthians 11-12; Psalm 73; Life of Joseph Gen 37-50; Mary & Martha Luke 10:38-42

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.

Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4 Ron & Val

Seeing the Invisible,
Embracing the Unapproachable,
Declaring the Unexplainable,
Changed by the Immutable,
Running after the Irresistible
With inexhaustible joy
In our inexpressible sorrows,
Spending our time on eternity,
Owning nothing yet possessing everything
That matters and lasts.
We are Pilgrims in Paradox.
Welcome to THE JOURNEY